



METROPOLITAN
TRANSPORTATION
COMMISSION

Agenda Item 5

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MTC Advisory Council
May 14, 2008
Minutes

Bob Planthold called the meeting to order at 12:40 p.m. In attendance were members Wendy Alfsen, Paul Cohen, Karla Goodbody, David Grant, Mary Griffin, William Hastings, John Inks, Xiao-Yun Lu, James McGhee, Eli Naor, Margaret Okuzumi, Michael Pechner, and Don Rothblatt. Commissioner Giacomini was also in attendance.

Minutes

The minutes were approved unanimously as corrected. The next Advisory Council meeting was incorrectly indicated at May 9 [correct date 5/14].

Public Comment - No public comment.

Report from the Minority Citizens Advisory Committee (MCAC); Report from the Elderly and Disabled Advisory Committee (EDAC)

Mr. James McGhee stated that MCAC's subcommittee's, which are Lifeline, T2035/Equity Analysis, and the High School Internship committee, have been meeting on a regular basis. He noted that they have been making sound recommendations to staff in reference to MCAC's priorities.

Mr. David Grant stated that EDAC reviewed three different projects. The first was the Transit Improvement Project, which lists approximately 1000 projects worth about \$12 billion. The second was the Hub Signage Program, which is designed to re-do the signage in transit hubs throughout the Bay Area. The third was the 511 Trip Planner where they looked at the Beta test version. He also stated that EDAC sent a representative to the MTC Planning Committee to present the Joint Advisory Committee recommendations.

Staff Report

Ms. Therese Knudsen announced that the last Joint Advisors meeting is scheduled for 6/5/08 from 12:30 p.m. to 2:30 p.m. in MTC's Auditorium.

She also mentioned that on April 10, 2008 the CTC approved a \$3B program of projects for the Trade Corridor Improvement Fund (TCIF), which included \$825 million for 14 projects in Northern California – six of the goods-movement projects are in the Bay Area. She stated that a complete list of TCIF projects is available on the CTC Web site at: www.catc.ca.gov.

Ms. Knudsen commented that the deadline for MTC's 2008 Transportation Awards has been extended to May 23, 2008. The nomination form can be found at MTC's web site at www.mtc.ca.gov.

She mentioned that Bike to Work Day is May 15. More information can be found at <http://www.bayareabikes.org/btwd/index.php>.

Lastly, she announced ABAG's 2008 Best Practice Conference Series. The next meeting is scheduled for June 5, 2008, from 9:00 a.m. – noon at the Gaila Art Center in Berkeley. The topic is FOCUS on Bay Area housing.

TransLink® for Transit-Oriented Development (TOD)

Ms. Valerie Knepper stated that MTC is developing cards to conveniently pay for transit rides in the Bay Area, called TransLink®, that provide a cashless way to pay for trips on transit. The TransLink® card stores value in the form of electronic cash and transit passes. Now that the TransLink® cards are operational on a few key transit systems, MTC is developing a “soft roll out” of this program for the public.

She stated that staff, working cooperatively with AC Transit staff, has developed a new pilot project that will provide transit passes for residents of select TODs, and to subsequently evaluate the impact of the program. This project will provide residents of select TODs transbay travel on AC Transit's system for one year using TransLink® cards. The “TransLink® for TOD” customers will provide valuable feedback about the TransLink® program, as well as provide travel pattern and usage data to support MTC's ongoing TOD initiatives.

Ms. Knepper summarized the description of the Pilot TransLink® for TOD project and the benefits.

In closing, she stated that MTC is currently in the process of signing up approximately 1300 housing units. MTC has preliminary participation in Berkeley with 540 units, Oakland with 450 units, Emeryville, with 60 units, and Richmond with 230 units. She noted that staff still has additional capacity in the project for about 200 units, and is currently looking for market rate units that are already occupied.

A press release for this project to publicize the effort is tentatively scheduled for June 10th in Berkeley.

Committee comments include:

- Send information about the press conference to all MTC advisors
- Look at UC Berkeley Family Housing – staff response: they already have “class passes”
- Look at Union City because it’s at the nexus of both BART and the bus line that runs into Silicon Valley
- Invite the Federal Transit Administration to the press conference
- Suggest producing a map showing locations (along with their size) of the projects
- Mode share aspect is very important – should have a better understanding of mode share
- How far are units from transit?
- Need more sites in south Alameda County – Hayward has a very central transportation hub around their BART station, as well as AC Transit. Staff: want good access to AC Transit, but the project is looking for locations that are not right across from BART since the TransLink® card cannot currently be used on BART.
- How many cards are available – is it 1 per unit or per family? Staff: They will be distributed first come, first served (up to 1900 passes total). There can be more than one distributed per unit.
- What is the criteria for success? Staff: Thresholds have not been set, but staff will be looking at how many people take the cards, how they use the cards, etc. Both pre and post surveys will be administered.
- What is the budget for the project? Staff: MTC has a \$250,000 contract with AC Transit

- There is a big difference between automatic distribution and having to sign up. Distribution should be automatic to improve usage.
- When do other systems go on-line with TransLink®? Staff: Muni is projected for this summer, BART is projected for the fall. If other systems come on-line later, then those using the cards could add money for those systems.
- Request for a TransLink® and Universal Fare (Muni) presentation to be made to Advisory Council

Legislative Update

Ms. Ellen Griffin commented on State Legislation and noted that all bills need to have advanced out of their policy committees by now to remain viable. Likewise, all bills must clear the Senate or Assembly Appropriations committees in May. She also stated that the governor is expected to issue budget revisions based on updated revenue forecasts – the estimated gap between proposed state spending and anticipated revenues has grown to \$20 billion.

She also highlighted two bills that were to raise transportation revenues, but failed passage – AB2480 and SB1731.

The news within Federal Legislation is the proposal from two of the three presidential candidates to temporarily suspend the federal tax on gasoline. Members of Congress are considering these proposals. MTC does not support suspending the gas tax, and will write a letter to Congressional leadership expressing this view. MTC's Legislation Committee will hear updates on both authorizing legislation and the "gas tax holiday" proposals.

Lastly, she mentioned that the High Speed Rail Bond is going to be on the November ballot, which would make the Altamont Corridor eligible for funding.

Committee comments include:

- Where are we with reauthorization? Staff: It is too early, but the Revenue Study Commission Report could be the basis behind it.
- What about raising the federal gas tax? Staff: No support. At the regional level, when polling for Transportation 2035, there is also not much support for a gas tax right now due to high gas prices.

- Why did the Huffman bill fail? Staff: There is a similar bill that is sponsored by a Southern California representative so Southern California representatives were in favor of that bill.

Interstate 80 Corridor Study

Mr. James Corless stated that on April 10, 2008 MTC, ABAG, the Sacramento Area Council of Governments (SACOG), the Solano Transportation Authority, Caltrans and U.C. Davis hosted an interregional summit to discuss solutions to developing a stronger interregional partnership. Over a dozen breakout groups discussed the study finding and recommendation. Suggestions from the participants in the breakout groups included: 1) Develop a technical coordinating committee; 2) Develop a corridor-wide interregional “blueprint” for both the I-80 corridor and Capitol Corridor; 3) Consider a corridor wide Joint Powers Authority for the I-80 corridor; 4) Continue to finance the development of a statewide travel model; 5) Do a better job at coordinating demographic forecasts and transportation investments for both regions; 6) Strengthen the transportation-land use connection along the corridor, and 7) Strengthen communication and coordination between Yolo County and the Bay Area planning agencies as well as Solano County and SACOG.

Committee comments include:

- Some do not want coordinated planning, even elected officials.
- Look at “mega regions” – expanded areas for comprehensiveness. The Appalachian region could be an example.
- MTC needs to be a major stakeholder as well as Caltrans. A Joint Powers Authority (JPA) could bring stakeholders together
- Include the Highway 4.
- Would like to see a similar discussion between San Joaquin/ Stanislaus Counties about coordinating transportation planning. Staff: There is a study about to get underway between Alameda and San Joaquin Counties, and could be a topic for future discussion.
- How would a JPA work? Staff: Some freeway corridors have JPAs that could serve as examples.
- There are also air quality aspects to consider in this corridor.

Other Business/Public Comment - There was no other business. The next meeting of the Advisory Council is scheduled for June 11, 2008. The meeting was adjourned at 2:15 p.m.